

City of Graham

City Council Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2025



The City Council of the City of Graham held a regularly scheduled meeting on December 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall Municipal Building, 201 South Main Street, Graham, NC.

Council Members Present:

Mayor Jennifer Talley
Mayor Pro Tem Ricky Hall
Council Member Bobby Chin
Council Member Bonnie Whitaker
Incoming Mayor Chelsea Dickey
Incoming Council Member Jim Young

Staff Present:

Megan Garner, City Manager
Aaron Holland, Assistant City Manager
Bob Ward, City Attorney
Bryan Coleman, City Attorney
Renee Ward, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Jennifer Talley called the meeting to order and presided.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pastor Brian Biggers, Grace Chapel, gave the invocation, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

OLD BUSINESS:

ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES:

City Council considered approving the November 4, 2025, City Council meeting minutes and the Closed Session meeting minutes, as well as the November 7, 2025, and November 24, 2025, Special meeting minutes.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the minutes, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF THE GRAHAM REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN:

City Council considered approval of the Graham Regional Park Master Plan.

Mr. Michael Alderman and Ms. Kristen Herndon from Withers Ravenel presented the final master plan for the Graham Regional Park. They discussed the four-step process, community feedback, and the chosen "balanced" concept, which includes athletic fields, a splash pad, an amphitheater, and various trails. They also touched upon considerations for future phasing and funding.

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to approve the Graham Regional Park Master Plan, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION TO MAYOR JENNIFER TALLEY

A plaque was presented to Mayor Jennifer Tally in honor of her outstanding leadership, dedication, and service serving as Graham’s Mayor from December 2021 to December 2025. Mayor Tally expressed her gratitude and highlighted key achievements during her term.

CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION: City Clerk Renee Ward

City Clerk Renee Ward confirmed the certification of the election held on November 4, 2025, as certified by the Alamance County Board of Elections.

Votes for Mayor:

Chelsea Dickey 1,363
Jennifer Talley 1,025

It was confirmed that Chelsea Dickey is the duly elected Mayor for a two-year term expiring December 2027.

Votes for Council Members:

Bobby Chin 1,161
Jim Young 1,105
Randy Phillips 1,091
Daniel Alvis 924

It was confirmed that Bobby Chin and Jim Young are the duly elected Council Members for a four-year term expiring December 2029.

ORGANIZATION OF CITY COUNCIL: Oath of Office to Newly Elected Officials

Mr. Hunt Johnson administered the oath of office to Chelsea Dickey as Graham’s incoming elected Mayor.

The Honorable Craig Turner, District Court Judge, administered the oath of office to Council Member Bobby Chin as Graham’s re-elected Council Member.

Mr. Stephen M. Ross, North Carolina House of Representatives, administered the oath of office to Jim Young as Graham’s incoming elected Council Member.

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CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Chelsea Dickey continued the meeting and presided.

NEW COUNCIL CONVENES: Election of Mayor Pro Tem and Oath of Office

Motion by Council Member Chin to nominate Ricky Hall as Mayor Pro Tem, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION: President, Tracey Grayzer, Impact Alamance

Tracy Grayzer, President of Impact Alamance, thanked the City Council for its partnership over the past 10 years. She highlighted Impact Alamance's approximately \$492,000 investment in 11 grants for the City of Graham, including contributions to Graham’s Regional Park.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. To approve an interlocal agreement with the City of Burlington to operate the Burlington Animal Services Pet Adoption and Resource Center.
- B. To approve a resolution awarding a police badge and service sidearm to Retired Police Sergeant Neil Gardner Rains.
- C. To approve a budget amendment for \$26,000 in Federal Drug Funds for use by the Police Department.

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Contracted Services	-	26,000.00	26,000.00		26,000.00
	-	26,000.00	26,000.00	-	26,000.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					
	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Federal Drug Funds	\$0.00	\$26,000.00	\$26,000.00		\$26,000.00
	-	26,000.00	26,000.00	-	26,000.00
Adopted this 9th day of December 2025.					

- D. To approve a budget amendment for \$25,000 for vehicle maintenance of the Fire Departments’ front-line apparatus.

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Repair & Maintenance Vehicles	32,000.00	57,000.00	25,000.00		25,000.00
	32,000.00	57,000.00	25,000.00	-	25,000.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					
	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Fund Balance Appropriation	\$1,456,337.00	\$1,481,337.00	\$25,000.00		\$25,000.00
	1,456,337.00	1,481,337.00	25,000.00	-	25,000.00

E. To approve the following 2026 City Council meeting dates and 6:00 pm meeting time:

January 13	February 10	March 10	April 14	May 12	June 9
July 14	August 11	September 8	October 13	November 10	December 8

F. To approve tax releases in the amount of \$393.21.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 1: COUNCIL – BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

City Council made assignments as board liaisons on the following boards:

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Members to serve as primary liaison or alternate on the following boards:

Appearance Commission/Tree Board – Mayor Dickey

Graham Historical Museum – Mayor Dickey

Historic Resources Commission – Mayor Dickey / Alternate Council Member Young

Recreation Commission – Council Member Chin

Economic Development & Marketing Committee – Council Member Whitaker / Alternate Mayor Dickey

Alamance County Community Services Agency – Council Member Young

Audit Committee – Mayor Dickey

Alamance County Economic Development Committee: Mayor Pro Tem Hall / Alternate Mayor Dickey

Piedmont Triad Regional Council – Council Member Chin /Alternate Mayor Pro Tem Hall

Transportation Advisory Committee – Mayor Pro Tem Hall /Alternate Council Member Whitaker

The motion died for a lack of a second.

After further discussion about who would serve on the Alamance County Economic Development Committee and the Economic Development & Marketing Committee, the Council made individual motions to appoint liaisons for each board.

Motion by Council Member Chin for Mayor Pro Tem Hall to serve as the primary liaison on the **Alamance County Economic Development Committee** and the alternate Council Member Whitaker, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

Motion by Council Member Chin for Mayor Dickey to serve as the primary liaison for the **Appearance Commission/Tree Board**, seconded by Mayor Dickey. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Chin for Mayor Pro Tem Hall to serve as the primary liaison on the **Economic Development Committee** and the alternate Council Member Whitaker, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Whitaker to serve as primary liaison on the **Graham Historical Museum**, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Young to serve as primary liaison on the **Historic Resources Commission**, and Mayor Dickey as the alternate, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Chin to serve as primary liaison on the **Recreation Commission**, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Whitaker to serve as primary liaison on the **Economic Development & Marketing Committee**, and Mayor Dickey as an alternate, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Jim Young to serve as primary liaison on the **Alamance County Community Services Agency**, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey, for herself to serve as primary liaison on the **Audit Committee**, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Dickey for Council Member Chin to serve as the primary liaison for the **Piedmont Triad Regional Council** and Mayor Pro Tem Hall as the alternate. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Chin for Mayor Pro Tem Hall to serve as the primary liaison for the **Transportation Advisory Committee** and Mayor Dickey as the alternate. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Renee Russell, 218 Ward Street, Graham, inquired about the City's Economic Development & Marketing Committee. She expressed interest in serving on this committee and asked where she could get more information. Mayor Dickey stated this would be explained under Council comments.

CITY STAFF COMMENTS

There were no staff comments.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Young read the following statement and asked that it be recorded in the minutes. He also stated that after the statement was read, he was done with this matter.

Statement from Councilman Jim Young Regarding Recent Mayoral Election

The recent mayoral race in Graham crossed boundaries that should never be breached in a local, non-partisan election. Our city was inundated with out-of-state money, outside political influence, and misleading campaign messaging designed to divide this community and sway voters. That is not who we are, and it is not how elections in Graham should be conducted.

I believe this behavior eroded public trust and compromised the integrity of our electoral process. Local elections should be decided by residents—not by activist networks, political operatives, or donors who have never been to this city.

I will request that this concern be recorded in the official public record, and I plan to support measures that safeguard future municipal elections from similar interference. No matter the outcome, the people of Graham deserve campaigns rooted in truth, transparency, and basic decency.

Moving forward, my commitment is clear: I will serve with integrity, answer to the citizens of Graham, and defend the independence of our local government from outside agendas.



Jim Young
Councilman

Council Member Chin stated that regarding the Economic Development & Marketing Committee, Council had been trying to establish it, but had difficulty finding folks to serve. He added that the Council wanted to include businesspeople, developers, and an attorney with an interest in developing Graham's economy. The committee was meant to grow our community, so the City did not have to rely solely on property taxes to fund operations. He added the need for policies and direction to encourage businesses to come to Graham rather than disincentivize them.

Mayor Dickey asked when the board would be advertised again.

City Manager Garner stated that the boards and commissions are typically advertised at the beginning of the year, around March, and all vacancies will be advertised on the website and social media.

Council Member Whitaker thanked everyone for coming out tonight and supporting the Council and the Mayor. She also thanked the Recreation Department and Withers Ravenel for their outstanding work on the Graham Regional Master Plan. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall thanked Recreation and Parks Director Brian Faucette and staff for the lighting of the tree and fireworks event, which was great. He wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

Mayor Dickey thanked City staff and all departments for keeping us safe and keeping us moving. She thanked GABA for the wonderful Christmas parade and Parks and Recreation for the lighting of the tree.

Mayor Dickey asked that the Council bring forward the Sesquicentennial Park for discussion on the January agenda. She stated there could be potential funding for the park. The Council's consensus was to add this to the January agenda. Mayor Dickey also noted that the Council had not formally adopted a policy governing the process and procedures for Council meetings. She asked that this be added to the January agenda to adopt measures that make Council meetings more efficient and provide clearer guidelines to staff. The Council's consensus was to add this to the January agenda.

Mayor Dickey also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and invited everyone back in January.

CLOSED SESSION

City Council considered going into closed session to discuss a potential litigation matter in accordance with N.C.G.S. Section 143-318.11(a)(3).

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to go into closed session to discuss a potential litigation matter in accordance with N.C.G.S. Section 143-318.11(a)(3), seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tom Boney, Alamance News, asked whether there was any pending litigation that was the subject of the closed session.

City Attorney Ward stated it was not.

The closed session was held.

Motion by Council Member Chin to go out of closed session, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Chin to return to open session, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Chin to authorize condemnation proceedings for the following properties pertaining to the 10-inch water line replacement project, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Tax Map #

8895214347 8884677914
8895219154 8884688508
8894090924 8885804114
8894091597 8884776890
8894080228 8884781059
8894081393 8884788456
8884897006 8884794200
8884674800 8884870813
8884675857 8884880248
8884885212

Motion by Mayor Dickey to authorize staff to take appropriate action to resolve the ongoing dispute with the City of Mebane regarding wastewater capacity and related requirements and agreements, and employ the services of Ward and Coleman and/or associates outside of council as necessary, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Motion by Council Member Chin to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously. (7:53 p.m.)

Renee M. Ward, CMC
City Clerk